GHOST
THE
Shadow
DARK HORSE COMICS
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IN THE CANDLE-LIT SILENCE OF A TIBETAN MOUNTAINTOP LAMASERY, FIVE DECADES OF PROTECTIVE MEDITATION END WITH NEITHER CEREMONY NOR CELEBRATION.
IMMUNE TO TIME, THE THREE APPOINTED GUARDIANS OF DEATH ARE NOT EVEN AWARE OF ITS PASSAGE.
ALL RIGHT!-- GO POSTAL ON 'EM!
BWAAK
THE SIXTH ESCAPE IS STILLBORN...
BRAKKAKAKA
...AS THE COLLECTIVE MEDITATION ENTERS ITS DEEPEST PHASE OF FAILURE AND FINAL PEACE.
GET THE IDOL. NOW!

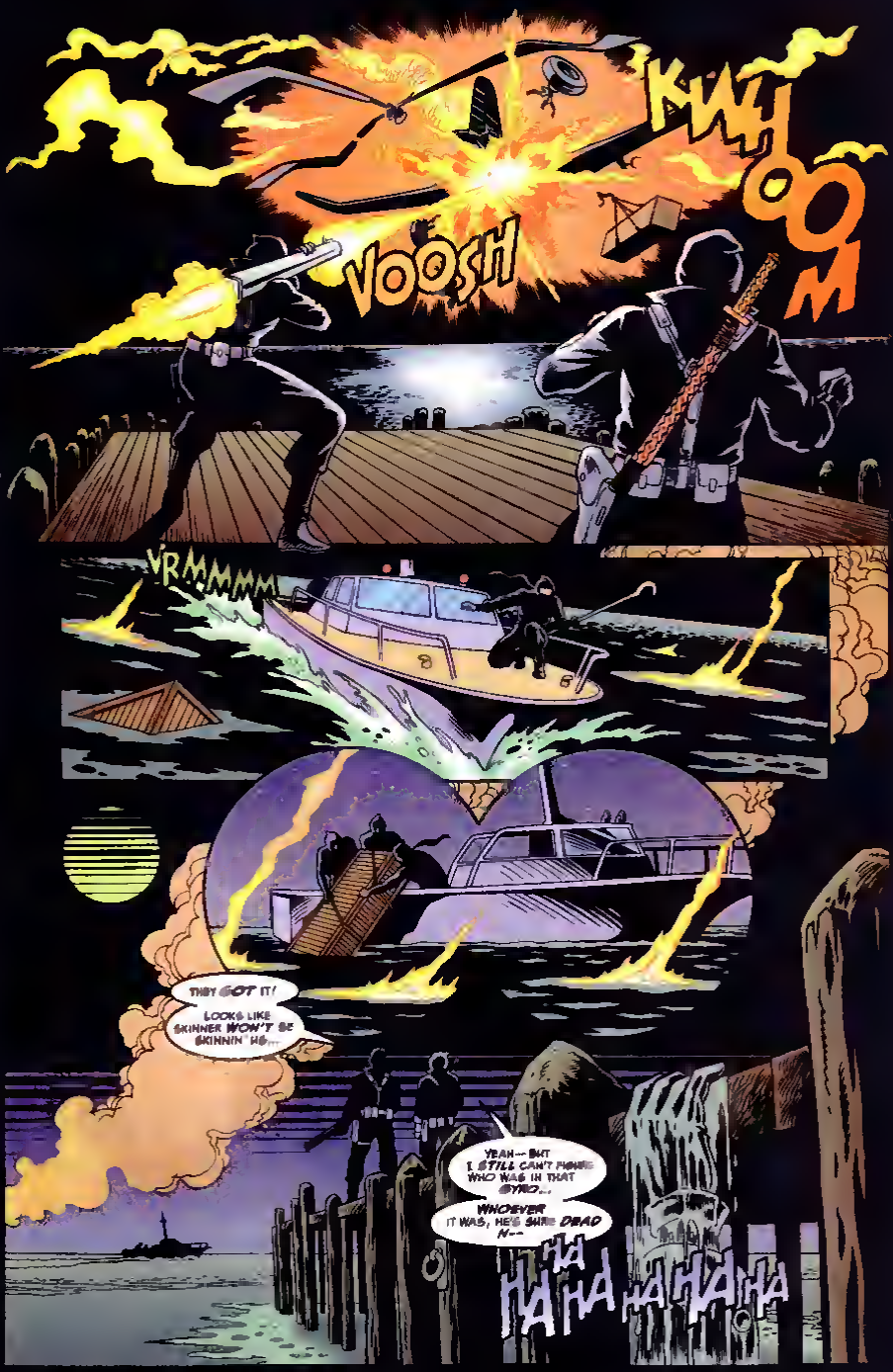
OUTSIDE, THE WIND SHRIEKS THROUGH THE SLASHING SNOW
BUT INSIDE, THERE IS NO MOVEMENT SAVE THE ILLUSION OF FLICKERING FLAME... AND THE SLOW SILENT SPREAD OF BLOOD
AFTER FIFTY YEARS, A WOMAN OF JADE HAS FINALLY WON
THE GODDESS OF DEATH IS FREE.
MOVE IT!
GO, GO, GO!
THAT WHICH WE HAVE LONG FEARED HAS NOW COME TO PASS... FOR WE HAVE FAILED TO PROTECT THE OUTSIDE WORLD FROM THE EVIL IN OUR CHARGE
IT... IT IS STILL BOUND IN JADE, HOLY KANGMI...
FOR HOW LONG?
BUT... WHO? WHERE?
"WHO" IS UNKNOWN. BUT WHERE IS CERTAIN.
THERE IS ONLY ONE PLACE IN THIS WORLD TO WHICH THE IDOL COULD BE DESTINED
...AND IT IS TIME, AT LAST, TO SPEAK THE WORD.
TWO WORDS...

THIS IS IT... WHAT I'VE AWAITED ALL THESE YEARS...
...THE MESSAGE I HOPED NEVER TO RECEIVE...
TULPA ARCADIA
...AND YET PRAYED FOR...
TEK
K-K-KREEEEE
...NOT TO SEE HIM AGAIN...
...ONE MORE TIME.
ABSOLUTE ZERO
NORMAL
ABSOLUTE ZERO
NORMAL
VMMMMM

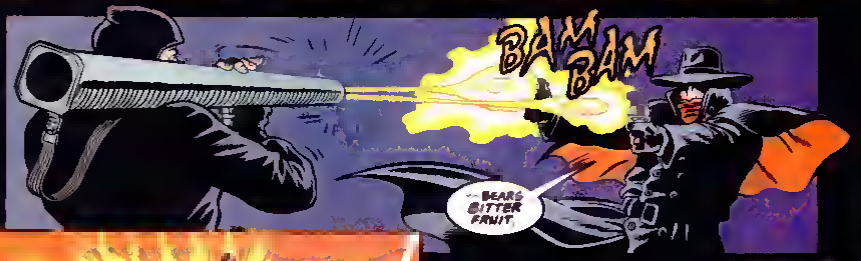
PSSHSHSHHHH
HARRY VINCENT? BUT... YOUR AGE... HAS IT BEEN THAT LONG?
I... YES, MR. CRANSTON. I'M AFRAID IT HAS.
KRKSH
YOUR OTHER ASSISTANTS... CLYDE BURKE, JERICHO DRUKE... EVEN MARGO LANE... I'M AFRAID THEY'RE ALL... WELL, THEY'VE--
--THEY'VE PASSED ON, SIR.
MARGO.
I... I'M MORE SORRY THAN YOU CAN KNOW, HARRY.
BUT SINCE I INSTRUCTED YOU TO REVIVE ME FOR ONE REASON AND ONE REASON ONLY... I ASSUME YOU'VE RECEIVED A MESSAGE FROM TIBET?
YES, SIR-- I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT "TULPA" MEANS. BUT
TULPA ARCADIA
TELL ME ABOUT ARCADIA, HARRY.

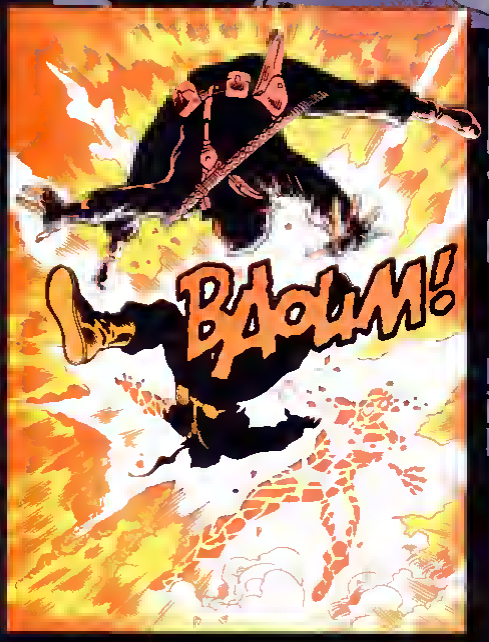
ARCADIA IS A CITY, SIR-- A STRANGE CITY, WITH A LARGE POPULATION OF PARA-NORMALS.
YOU CAN PIN IT ON ANY--
WELL, ON ANY MODERN MAP, ANYWAY, AND--
HA HA HA HA HA
MR. CRANSTON--?
CRANSTON'S GONE, HARRY-- BUT DON'T WORRY ABOUT ARCADIA...
...THE SHADOW WILL SOON KNOW.
HA HA HA HA HA HA
THEN LET EVIL LURK, SIR-- BECAUSE YOU CERTAINLY HAVEN'T LOST A STEP, AND IT DOES THESE OLD BONES PROUD TO SEE IT..
GOOD HUNTING TO YOU.

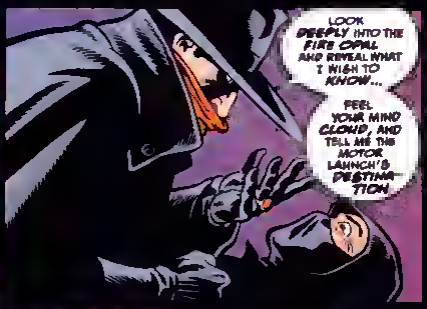
ARCADIA, TWO NIGHTS LATER:
THAT'S IT, HUH? SO WHAT'S SO SPECIAL ABOUT A CRATE?
HEY, HOW STUPID ARE YOU? DID ANY OF YOUR MOTHER'S CHILDREN LIVE? IT'S WHAT'S INSIDE THE CRATE THAT--
WPVPWPVP
HUH? IZZAT... AN AUTOGYRO?
IT AIN'T A DRAGONFLY... BUT WHO THE--?
VPWPWPWP
CLACK!
DON'T MATTER WHO IT IS! WE LOSE SKINNER'S CRATE, HE'S GONNA MAKE US HOLIER'N HIS NEW PARTNER!
HURRY IT UP, MAN!
BLOW THAT GYRO OUTTA THE SKY!


KA-
VOOSH
OOM
VRMMMM
THEY GOT IT!
LOOKS LIKE SKINNER WON'T BE SKINNIN' HO...
YEAH-- BUT I STILL CAN'T FIGURE WHO WAS IN THAT GYRO...
WHOEVER IT WAS, HE'S SURE DEAD N--
HA HA HA HA HA HA

WHERE'D HE COME FR--?
NHKH 'IM!
YEAH, ALREADY LOADED ANOTHER ROCKET IN CASE THE FIRST ONE--
THE WEED OF CRIME--

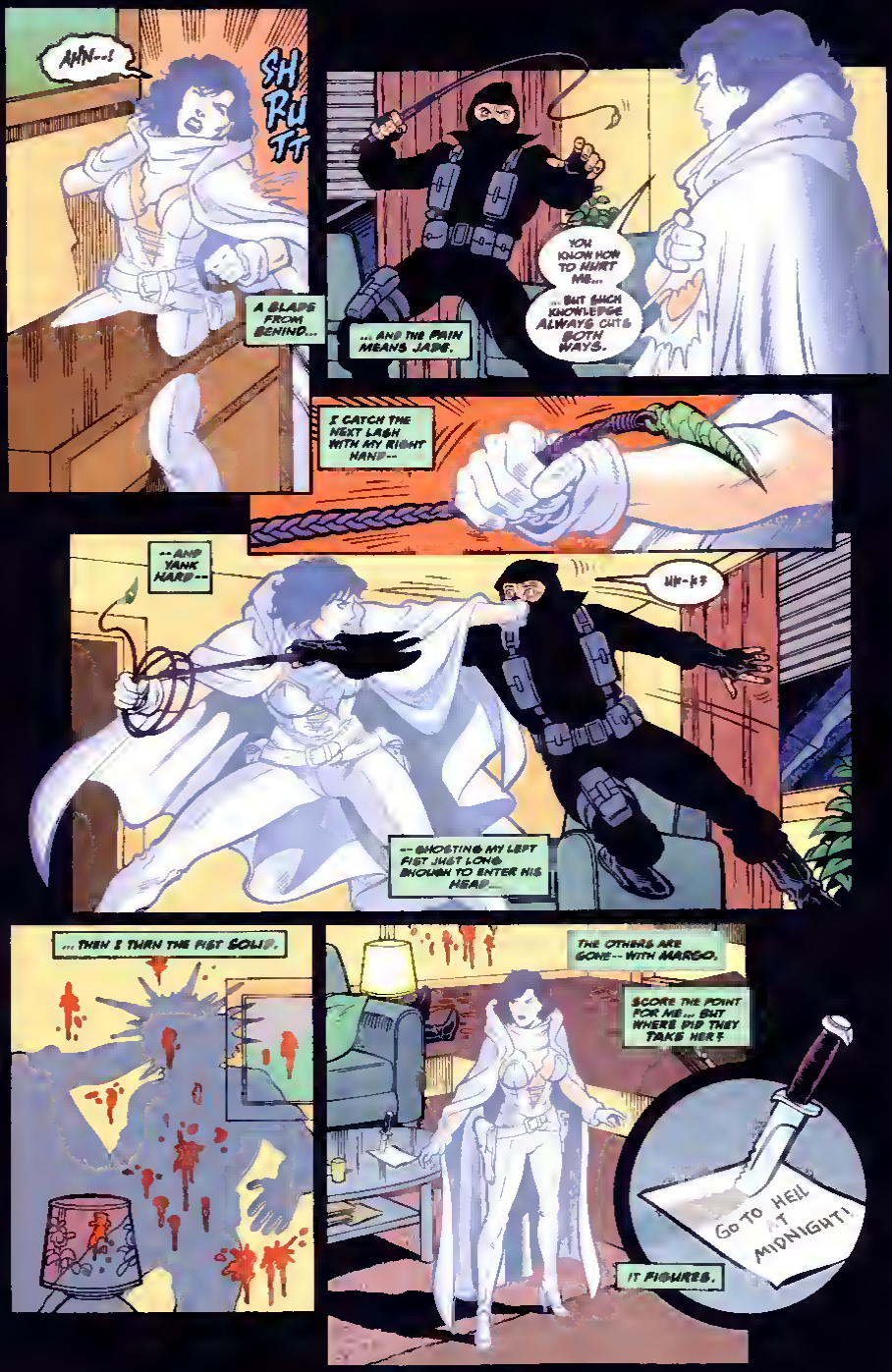

BAM BAM
--BEARS BITTER FRUIT.


BAOUM!

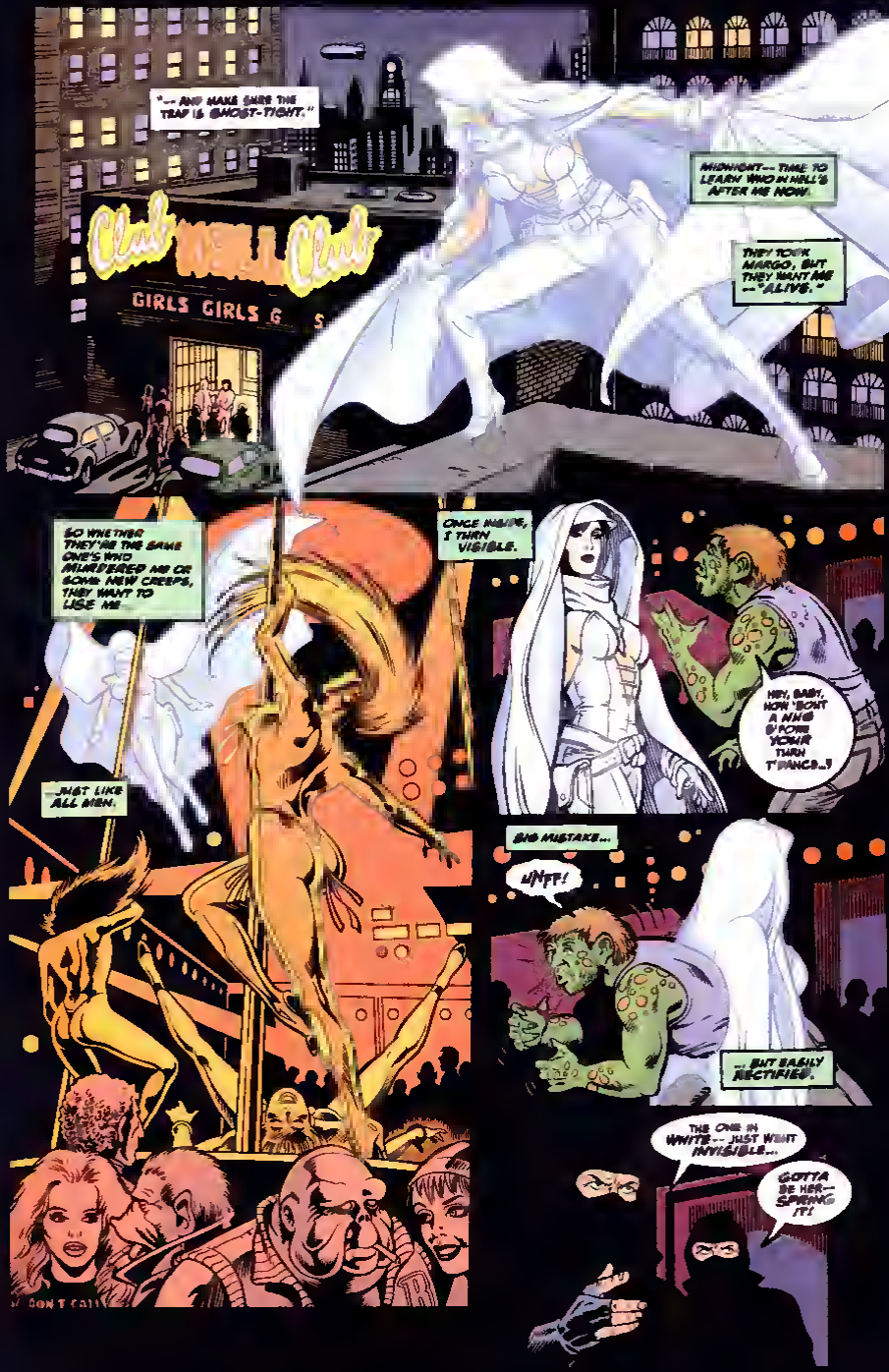

LOOK DEEPLY INTO THE FIRE COAL AND REVEAL WHAT I WISH TO KNOW...
FEEL YOUR MIND CLOUD, AND TELL ME THE MOTOR LAUNCH'S DESTINATION.

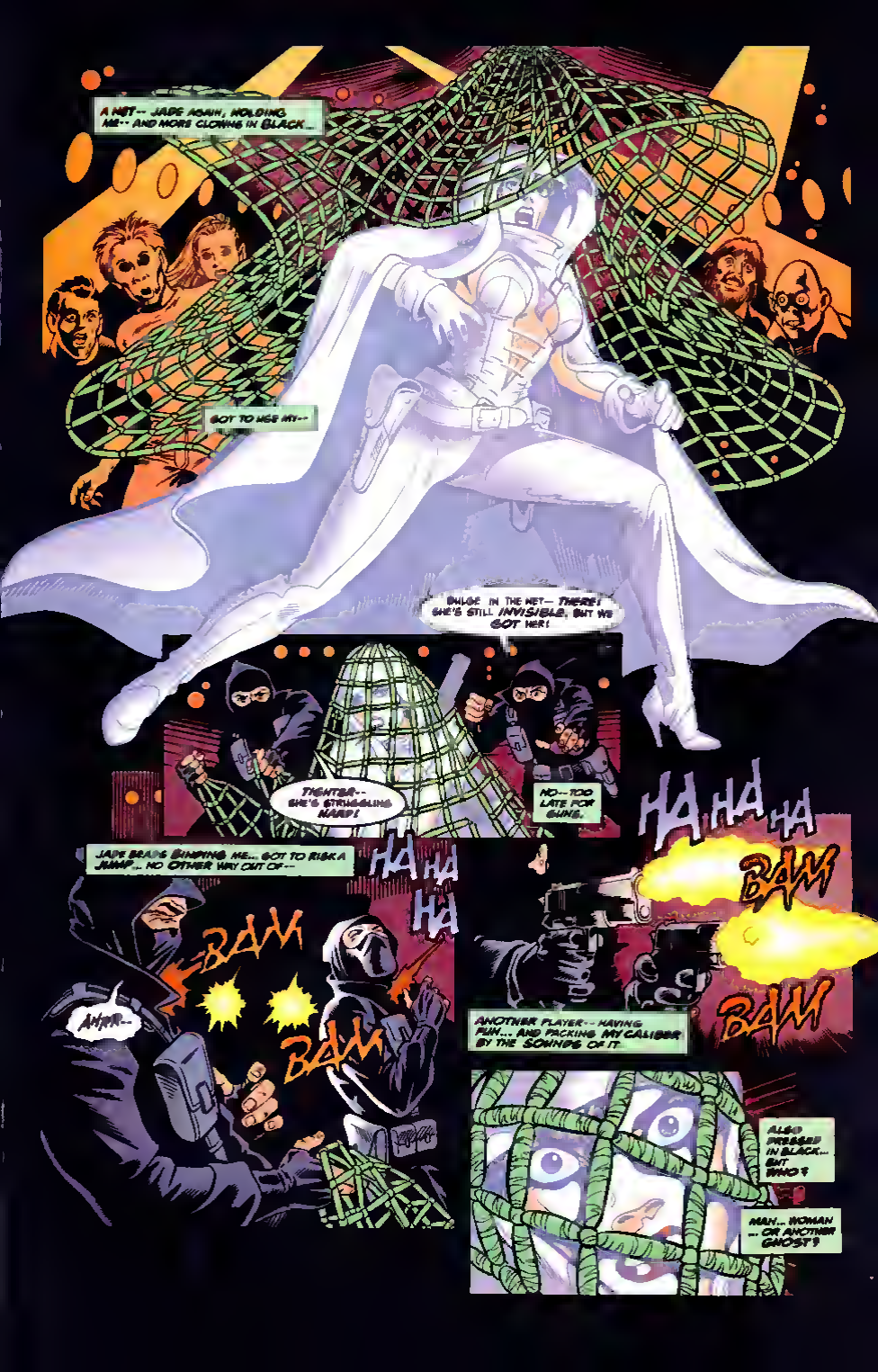
TELL ME WHO WANTS THE CRATE...
TELL ME WHO CRAVES... DEATH.

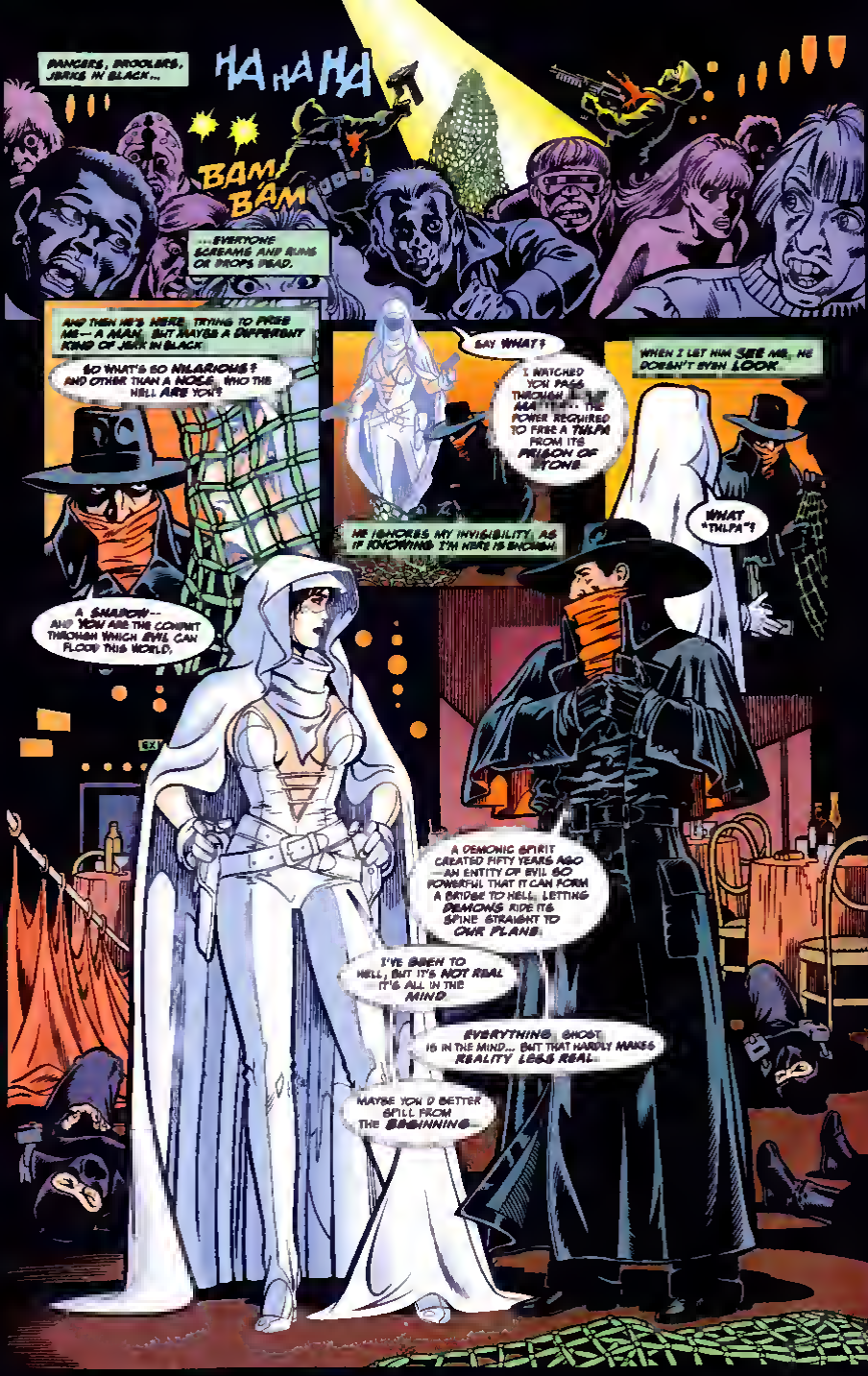
IT NEVER FAILS-- I TRY TO PROTECT HER AND SHE LOWERS THE BOOM.
SO NOW I CAN'T EVEN GO OUT
ALL I SAID WAS BE CARE FUL, MARGO
I'M TIRED OF HAULING YOUR HINDQUARTERS OUT OF THE HEAT
YEAH? WHY SHOULD YOU EVEN WORRY ABOUT MY--
BECAUSE THEY CAN'T HURT ME, AND I DON'T CARE ABOUT ANYBODY ELSE!
YOU'RE MY ONLY WEAKNESS, THE ONLY BUTTON THEY CAN PUNCH!
DON'T FLATTER YOURSELF, ELISA! NO ONE'S AFTER YOU, AND NOTHING'S GONNA HAPPEN TO M--
TAKE HER ALIVE!
IF HE MEANS MARGO, SCORE ONE POINT FOR ME-- BUT IF HE MEANS ME, THEY'RE OUT OF LUCK...
...BECAUSE I'M ALREADY DEAD.
HEY-- OUR DOOR!
I SHED ELISA CAMERON LIKE DEAD SKIN TO BECOME WHO AND WHAT I REALLY AM-- GHOST!
A GHOST WHO REELS LIKE [illegible]ING HER [illegible]ALTH--
-- BY GHOSTING THE BLACK-CLAD LEAPER RIGHT THROUGH AN OUTER WALL.
I LET GO, RESTORING HIS MASS AND WEIGHT ONLY WHEN HE'S FULLY OUTSIDE
YAAAAA
CONTRARY FELLOW-- BECAME A GHOST BEFORE HE DIED, BUT IT WON'T BE LONG NOW


AHN--!
SH
RU
TT
A SLAP FROM BEHIND...
... AND THE PAIN MEANS JADE.
YOU KNOW HOW TO HURT ME...
... BUT SUCH KNOWLEDGE ALWAYS CUTS BOTH WAYS.
I CATCH THE NEXT LASH WITH MY RIGHT HAND--
--AND YANK HARD--
UH-K?
--SHOOTING MY LEFT FIST JUST LONG ENOUGH TO ENTER HIS HEAD--
... THEN I TURN THE FIST SOLID.
THE OTHERS ARE GONE-- WITH MARGO.
SCORE THE POINT FOR ME... BUT WHERE DID THEY TAKE HER?
GO TO HELL AT MIDNIGHT!
IT FIGURES.

MAN, BUT I SURE PICKED ME ONE HOLY PARTNER, SONGPA.
THE WOUNDS INFLICTED BY AN EXPLOSIVE FIRE ARE--
YEAH, YEAH, BUT WHY YOU CHOSE TRANSPARENT NEWSKIN TO COVER YOUR MOU--
YOUR ARCADIAN SCIENCE, MR. SKINNER, IS IRREGISTIBLE..
AND I ASSURE YOU, A VAST IMPROVEMENT OVER THE SKIN GRAFTS AND SCAR TISSUE THAT HELD MY BONES TOGETHER FOR THE FIVE DECADES PRIOR TO MY ARRIVAL HERE IN--
ALL RIGHT, SONGPA-- AS LONG AS THIS IDOL IS EVERYTHING YOU CLAIM.
THE TULPA SEALED WITHIN ITS JADE IS MY OWN CREATION.
THEN WHY CAN'T WE JUST SHATTER THE IDOL AND FREE YOUR "TULPA"!
BECAUSE EVEN SHATTERED, THE JADE WOULD STILL IMPRISON IT-- IN PIECES.
WHICH IS WHY WE NEED GHOST. HUH? ALL RIGHT, BUT SHE AIN'T GONNA BE EASY TO--
WE GOT HER, MR. SKINNER.
GHOST--?
SHE COULD BE HERE RIGHT NOW, MORONS-- READY TO GHOST YOU ALL STRAIGHT TO HELL!
SHE CAN TURN INVISIBLE, YOU KNOW, AND YOU'D NEVER EVEN SUSPECT SHE WAS--
NO, THIS IS THE SISTER-- BUT WE LEFT THE MESSAGE.
AND LIKE WE SAID, WORD IS-- FOR THIS BAIT, GHOST WILL COME.
AHZELLE NOR--


"-- AND MAKE SURE THE TRAP IS GHOST-TIGHT."
GIRLS GIRLS G S
MIDNIGHT-- TIME TO LEARN WHO IN HELL'S AFTER ME NOW.
THEY TOOK MARGO, BUT THEY WANT ME --"ALIVE."
SO WHETHER THEY'RE THE SAME ONE'S WHO MURDERED ME OR SOME NEW CREEPS, THEY WANT TO USE ME.
...JUST LIKE ALL MEN.
ONCE INSIDE, I TURN VISIBLE.
HEY, BABY, HOW 'BOUT A NICE G'POKE YOUR TURN T'DANCE..!
BIG MISTAKE...
UNFF!
...BUT EASILY RECTIFIED.
THE ONE IN WHITE-- JUST WENT INVISIBLE...
GOTTA BE HER-- SPRING IT!

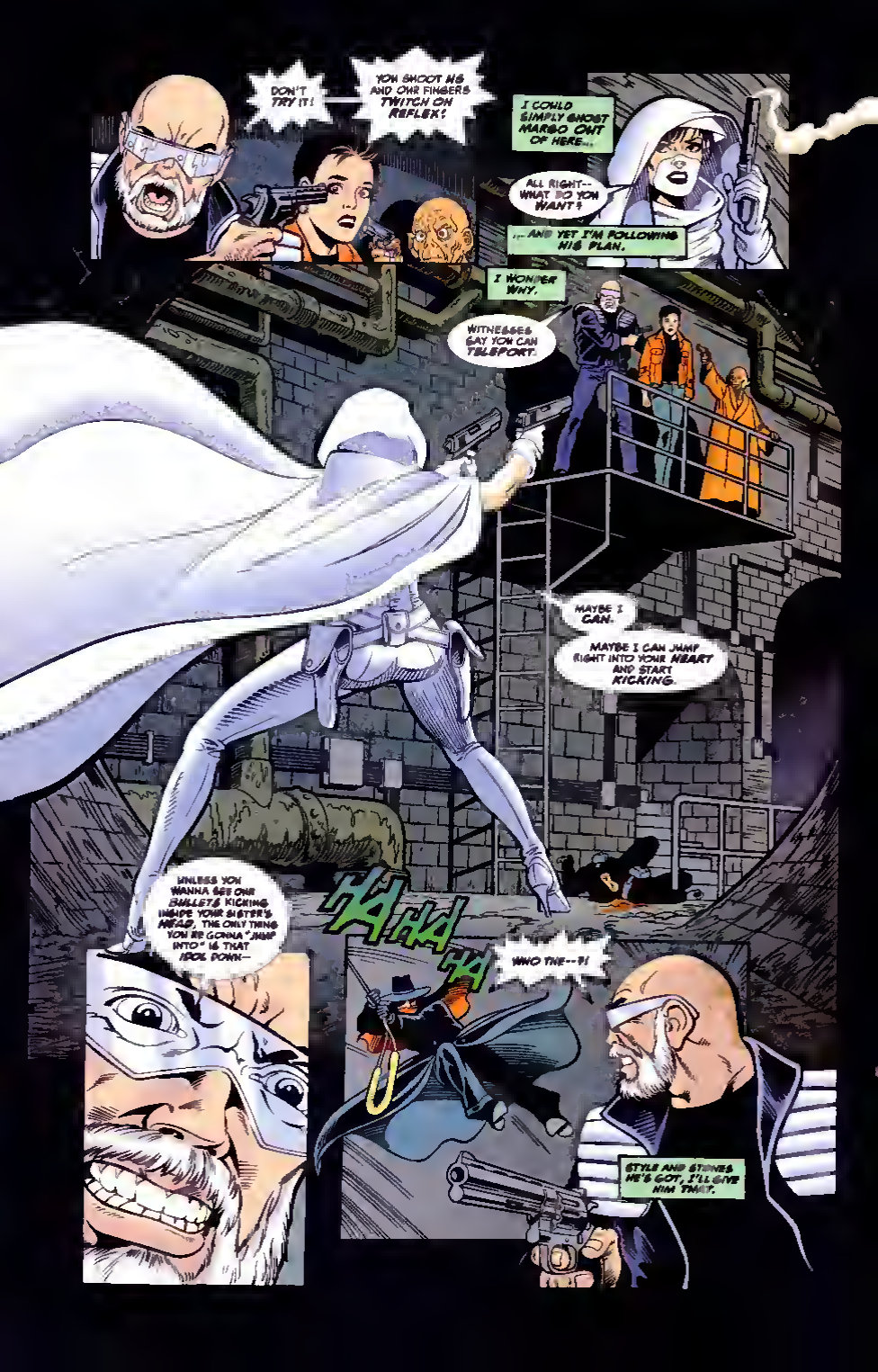

A HIT-- JADE AGAIN, HOLDING ME-- AND MORE CLOWNS IN BLACK...
GOT TO HEE MY--
BULGE IN THE NET-- THERE! SHE'S STILL INVISIBLE, BUT WE GOT HER!
TIGHTER-- SHE'S STRUGGLING HARD!
NO-- TOO LATE FOR SURE.
HA HA HA
BAM
BAM
JADE BRAINS BUMPING ME... GOT TO RISK A JUMP... NO OTHER WAY OUT OF--
HA HA HA
BAM
BAM
AHHH--
ANOTHER PLAYER-- HAVING FUN... AND PACKING MY CALIBER BY THE SOUNDS OF IT.
ALSO DRESSED IN BLACK... BUT WHO?
MAN... WOMAN -- OR ANOTHER GHOST?


RANGERS, BROOKLARS, JERKS IN BLACK...
HA HA HA
BAM BAM
...EVERYONE SCREAMS AND RUNS OR DROPS DEAD.
AND THEN HE'S HERE, TRYING TO FREE ME-- A MAN, BUT MAYBE A DIFFERENT KIND OF JERK IN BLACK.
SO WHAT'S SO HILARIOUS? AND OTHER THAN A NOSE, WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?
SAY WHAT?
I WATCHED YOU PASS THROUGH MA'[illegible]... THE POWER REQUIRED TO FREE A TULPA FROM ITS PRISON OF STONE...
WHEN I LET HIM SEE ME, HE DOESN'T EVEN LOOK.
WHAT "TULPA"?
HE IGNORES MY INVISIBILITY, AS IF KNOWING I'M HERE IS ENOUGH.
A SHADOW-- AND YOU ARE THE CONDUIT THROUGH WHICH EVIL CAN FLOOD THIS WORLD.
EX
A DEMONIC SPIRIT CREATED FIFTY YEARS AGO --AN ENTITY OF EVIL SO POWERFUL THAT IT CAN FORM A BRIDGE TO HELL, LETTING DEMONS RIDE ITS SPINE STRAIGHT TO OUR PLANE.
I'VE BEEN TO HELL, BUT IT'S NOT REAL IT'S ALL IN THE MIND.
EVERYTHING, GHOST, IS IN THE MIND... BUT THAT HARDLY MAKES REALITY LESS REAL.
MAYBE YOU'D BETTER START FROM THE BEGINNING...

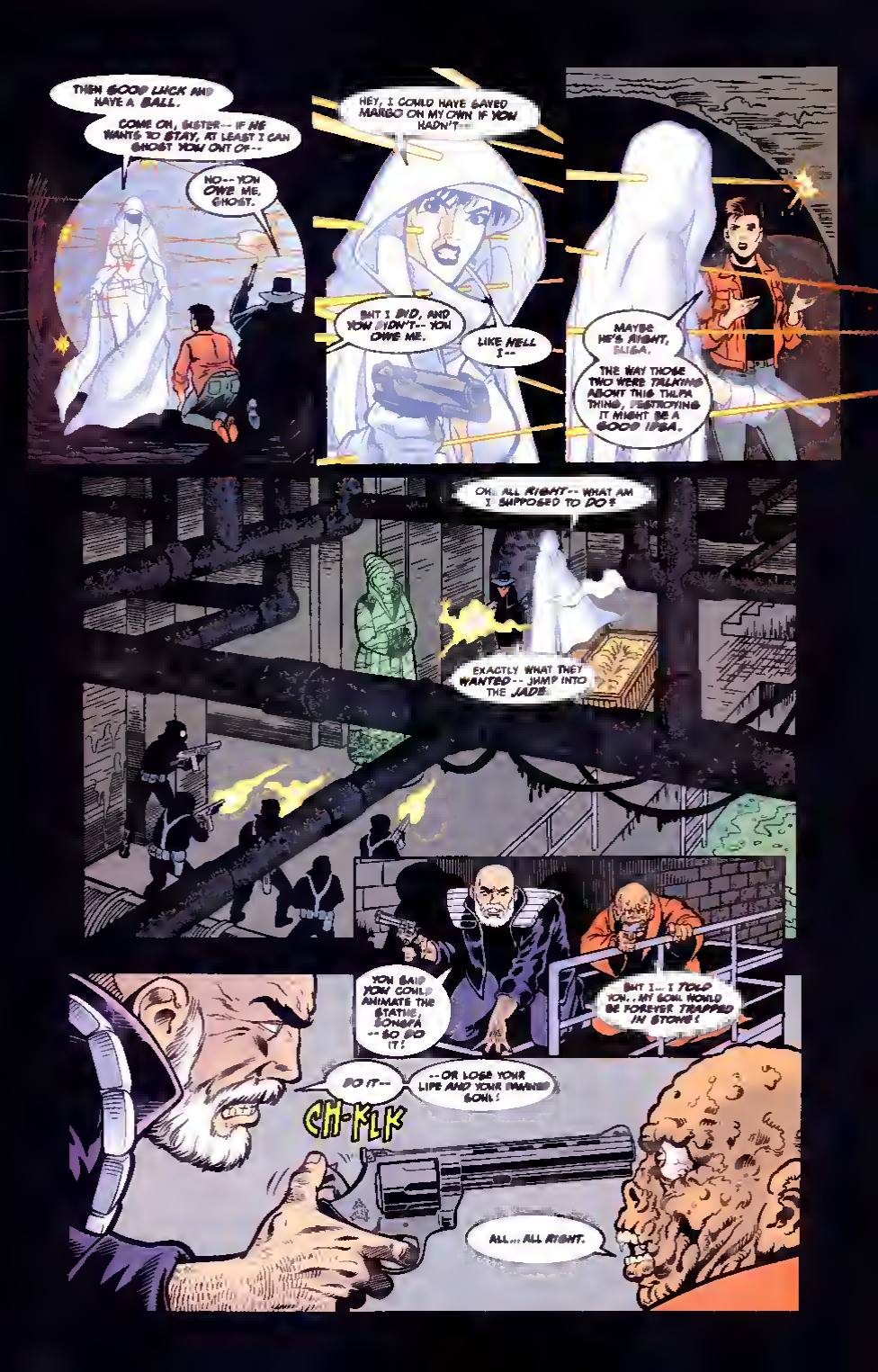
ONE THING YOU AIN'T EXPLAINED, SONAPA... IF YOUR TULPA IS SO POWERFUL, HOW DID IT GET IMPRISONED IN THE IDOL?
I WAS OPPOSED BY KANGMI, FROM WHOM OUR AGENTS TOOK THE IDOL... ...BY HIM, AND BY A SHADOWY MAN FROM THE WEST WITH MASTERY OVER THE WAYS OF THE EAST.
TOGETHER, THEY OVERWHELMED MY MIND... DEFEATED MY BODY IN FIRE...
...AND SEALED MY TULPA IN THE ONLY SUBSTANCE THAT COULD HOLD IT.
JADE -- ALSO THE ONLY SUBSTANCE WHICH GIVES GHOST TROUBLE -- SO EXACTLY HOW DOES SHE FREE YOUR TULPA?
SHE CANNOT... BUT SHE CAN ANIMATE THE COFFEE-- BRING THE IDOL TO LIFE-- AFTER MY TULPA HAS POSSESSED HER JADE-TRAPPED ESSENCE.
AND THIS IS SOMETHING YOU COULDN'T DO-- EVEN WITH ALL YOUR SO-CALLED MYSTICAL POWERS?
I COULD DO IT, MR. SKINNER, THROUGH ASTRAL PROJECTION-- BUT ONLY BY SACRIFICING MY-SELF, BY BECOMING THE EVIL ONE...
...AND TRUST ME, IT IS MORE REWARDING BY FAR TO CONTROL EVIL.
GOOD STORY-- EVEN IF YOU'RE NOT OLD ENOUGH FOR IT TO BE TRUE.
I HAVE... SUSPENDED PORTIONS OF MY LIFE.
SO YOU'RE A PARANORMAL? BUT--
MY LONGEVITY IS THE COMBINED RESULT OF TECHNOLOGY AND TECHNIQUES OF THE MIND...
TECHNIQUES LEARNED IN TIBET, THE SAME PLACE THE TULPA WAS CREATED AND IMPRISONED

THESE BEADS ARE JADE-- AND YOU COULD NOT PASS THROUGH THEM!
THAT'S RIGHT-- MY ONE WEAKNESS, OKAY?
AND THEIR USE OF JADE PROVES THEY'RE AWARE OF IT...
YOU'VE GOT A POINT.
THE TALPA THEY WANT YOU TO LOOSE... THE STONE IN WHICH IT'S BOUND IS JADE... SO WHY YOU? IS THERE ANY WAY YOU CAN PENETRATE THE JADE BARRIER?
NOT A WAY I ENJOY EXPLORING.
WHY AM I TELLING HIM ALL THIS?
WHY DO I TRUST HIM?
I CALL IT "JUMPING"-- TELEPORTING TO ANY POINT IN SPACE I CHOOSE -- AND IF THEY HAND MY SISTER'S LIFE AS A FOREVER FORCED TO JUMP INSURE YOUR STATUE
YOUR SOUL WOULD BE MESHED WITH THE TALPA-- AND FOREVER LOCKED IN JADE.
YOU WOULD BECOME EVIL INCARNATE ITSELF-- IN ETERNAL [redacted] WITH DEMONS ABLE TO POSSESS ANYONE YOUR JADE HANDS TOUCHED.
COME-- DOWN THESE BACK STAIRS.
WHY SHOULD I FOLLOW YOU? AND HOW DO YOU EVEN KNOW THEY'RE DOWN THERE?
I KNOW WHAT'S IN THEIR HEARTS-- AND DOWN HERE IS CLOSER TO HELL.
GOT TO ADMIT, HIS VOICE IS COMPELLING...

BUT STILL...
DON'T KNOW WHY I SHOULD TRUST YOU... BUT IF YOU CAN HELP RESCUE MARGO, MAYBE--
MY SISTER-- I TOLD YOU THEY TOOK HER--TO
MARGO?!
WHO DID YOU THINK I MEANT?
LONESOME I ONCE KNEW... ANOTHER MARGO.
SYNCHRONICITY... IS STRANGE
PRETTY SURE I HEARD 'EM SAY THEY HAUL HER, MR. SKINNER...
NOTHING AT ALL?
...THEN A LOT OF SCREAMIN' AND YELLIN', MAYBE GUNSHOTS ...THEN NOTHING FOR ABOUT FIVE MINUTES NOW...
WELL, MAYBE TWO VOICES COULDN'T MAKE OUT WHAT THEY WERE SAYIN', BUT SOUNDED LIKE A MAN AND A WOMAN
THEY'RE INTERROGATING HER IN THE CLUB AFTER I ORDERED THEM TO BRING HER DOWN HERE IMMEDIA
AGH-K
BAMM


DON'T TRY IT!
YOU SHOOT ME AND OUR FINGERS TWITCH ON REFLEX!
I COULD SIMPLY GHOST MARBO OUT OF HERE...
ALL RIGHT-- WHAT DO YOU WANT?
...AND YET I'M FOLLOWING HIS PLAN.
I WONDER WHY.
WITNESSES SAY YOU CAN TELEPORT.
MAYBE I CAN.
MAYBE I CAN JUMP RIGHT INTO YOUR HEART AND START KICKING.
UNLESS YOU WANNA SEE OUR BULLETS KICKING INSIDE YOUR SISTER'S HEAD, THE ONLY THING YOU'RE GONNA "JUMP INTO" IS THAT IDOL DOWN--
HAHAHA
WHO THE--?!
STYLE AND STRIVES HE'S GOT, I'LL GIVE HIM THAT.

HIM--HERE?! BUT I WILL NOT LET HIM STOP ME AGAIN!
NO! KEEP YOUR GUN ON THE SISTAH'S
DUF!
UMP
HUH--? WHO'RE YOU?!
A VERY SLIPPERY DEVIL, SIS...
...BUT WHAT THE HELL -- HE SAVED ME SOME TROUBLE.
GO FOR COVER-- AND STAY DOWN!
COVER? LET'S JUST GET OUT OF--
BRAKAKA
BUDDA-BUDDA
KA-BAW
BAM BAM
MARGO'S SAFE! THEY HAVE NO HOLD OVER ME! I CAN GHOST BOTH OF YOU RIGHT OUT OF--
NO-- FRIENDS GAVE THEIR LIVES PROTECTING THE WORLD FROM THE THING IN THAT
BAM-BAM
NOW IT HAS PASSED TO ME-- AND THEIR SACRIFICE WILL NOT BE IN VAIN


THEN GOOD LUCK AND HAVE A BALL.
COME ON, SISTER-- IF HE WANTS TO STAY, AT LEAST I CAN GHOST YOU OUT OF--
NO-- YOU OWE ME, GHOST.
HEY, I COULD HAVE SAVED MARBO ON MY OWN IF YOU HADN'T--
BUT I DID, AND YOU DIDN'T-- YOU OWE ME.
LIKE HELL I--
MAYBE HE'S RIGHT, ELISA.
THE WAY THOSE TWO WERE TALKING ABOUT THIS THUPA THING, DESTROYING IT MIGHT BE A GOOD IDEA.
OH... ALL RIGHT-- WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?
EXACTLY WHAT THEY WANTED-- JUMP INTO THE JADE.
YOU SAID YOU COULD ANIMATE THE STATUE, SONOFA --SO DO IT!
BUT I... I TOLD YOU... MY SOUL WOULD BE FOREVER TRAPPED IN STONE!
DO IT--
--OR LOSE YOUR LIFE AND YOUR DAMNED SOUL!
CH-KLK
ALL... ALL RIGHT.

BAM BAM
"DO IT," HMM? JUST LIKE THAT?
WHOEVER YOH ARE, YOH OUGHTTA CAN YOUR OWN LAUGHTER FOR REPLAY.
I'VE TOLD YOU-- I CAN'T PASS THROUGH JADE.
IF I JUMPED INTO IT, I'D BE TRAPPED INSIDE THE JADE!
UNDERSTAND? ONLY ONE THING CAN HURT ME, AND THAT ONE THING IS J--
SWUDF!
--UHH!
BAM BAM BRAKAKAKAK BAM BRAK
THWUMP
ELIBA--! THE STATUE-- IT'S ALIVE!
MAKE YOUR JUMP, GHOST-- BEFORE IT KILLS YOU!
CONQUER THE TULPA WITHIN...

AND TRUST THAT I WILL FREE YOU FROM WITHOUT!
BUT...
DO IT--
--NOW!!
KRUMPT
I JUMP--
--SEALING MYSELF IN JADE--
--WITH A DEMON--
--TRYING TO-- TAKE ME.
BZAKAKA
BZAKAKA
YOU'D BETTER KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING, BUSTER.
MY SISTER ALREADY DIED ONCE--
--AND I DON'T CARE HOW SHOOTING THE CEILING IS GONNA STOP THE SECOND TIME!
BEEOW
IZING
BZA
TZ IT
CHYEW

N-NO... CAN'T LET EVIL...
...T-TAKE ME...
LOOK OUT!
WUMP
GET... OUT... OF... ME!
CHUFT
THE CEILING--!
SHROOM

I'VE GOT YOU, MARGO!
BROKT
AND I GHOST HER JUST IN TIME...
... STRAIGHT UP THROUGH THE CEILING BLOCKS...
KRUMPH
... AND INTO THE ROARING NIGHT.
COULDN'T FIND HIM DOWN THERE-- AND NOW ... HE'S GONE.
YEAH, BUT HE WAS THERE WHEN IT COUNTED, ELISA... AND MAYBE ALL MEN AIN'T SO BAD. HNH?
EXCEPT HE WASN'T A MAN. HE WAS NOTHING MORE AND NOTHING LESS THAN WHAT HE SAID...
THE WHOLE CLUB, ELISA-- COLLAPSING!
... A SHADOW.
HA HA HA
HA HA HA
HA HA